

जातिंक

जात

Price Four Annas

जातक

जाति

Gopis' Love For Sri Krishna

जात



Goyis' Pubard.

Spiritual Greatness of the Gopis

"It is no use enjoying pleasure after pleasure and possessing immense wealth, nor is it any use becoming a great ascetic besmearing the body with ashes

"It is little use surrounding oneself with fires on all sides and sitting under the sun in summer, or acquiring the power of floating in water, or extending one's dominion across the seas

"You may repeat sacred formulas times without number, practise austerities and exercise control over body and mind, observe fasts for any number of days, undertake pilgrimages to a thousand sacred places, but who the devil cares for all these ?

"He is really an uncultured boor who loves not, nor enjoys the blessed

company of the beloved child of Nanda

"You may possess a number of mansions cast in gold, the splendour of which dazzles the eyes, and which are perpetually illumined by rows of bright rubies and other precious stones.

"To mention only a single fact indicative of worldly greatness, you may have a regular battalion of porters waiting at the door all the twenty-four hours to regulate the entry of visitors

"Nay, you may throw pearls to the crowd in charity after taking a plunge in the Ganges, or chant the Vedas twenty times or engage in meditation of the Lord

"All this is of no use, says Rasakhan, if you have not been able to love the yellow-robed Śrī Kṛṣṇa by offering Him the heart!"

It is nothing short of supererogation on the part of one like myself to attempt to write anything on the Love of the Gopis. The truth about that Love may be known to a certain extent

only by such lovers and devotees of the Lord to whom it may be revealed in all kindness by the Blissful Aspect of the Lord embodied as Śrī Rādhā, and by the Supreme Divine, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the transcendent ocean of Bliss and Love, the embodiment of Truth, Knowledge and Bliss. One who knows the truth about this Love cannot, again, speak or write about it, inasmuch as the sports of the Lord at Brīndāvan through which that Love is revealed cannot be expressed through words. It is something beyond human conception, transcendent, supernatural. The inhabitants of Vraja of the time of Śrī Kṛṣṇa were no other than the eternal associates of the Lord, who came from beyond the region of *Māyā*, and manifested themselves on earth in order to participate in the boyish sports of the Lord under the direction and guidance of His Divine Energy, Śrī Rādhā, who embodied the Blissful Aspect of the Lord. Even the creator of the universe, Brahmā, soliciting the dust of the

जावः

fect of these Mahātmās (great souls) manifested in Vraja, said:—

“O Lord, may I have the rare good fortune of being enlisted as a servant of Thine either in this very birth or even through birth in one of the lower species of animals, so that I may be able to serve Your sacred feet. Envious is the lot of Nanda and the other cowherds of Vraja, who have got Thee, the Supreme Eternal, Blissful Lord, for their friend. It is a great privilege to be born in Vraja, and more particularly in Gokula, even as an insect that crawls on earth, for that may afford one an opportunity of sanctifying one's head through the dust of the feet of any of the blessed inhabitants of Vraja.”

८ तदस्तु मे नाथ स भूमिभागो
भवेद्य नान्यत्र नु वा निस्थाम् ।
वेनाद्मेकोऽपि भवजनानां
दृष्ट्वा निखे दा पादपङ्क्तयम् ॥
अहो मायमहो भाग्य नन्दगोस्त्रचौकमाम् ।
जन्मर्धं परमानन्दं पुनै रेष मनामनम् ॥

जात

relations It is not possible for Me to repay the debt of this sacred Devotion of yours even if I serve you for the whole life-time of a celestial being You alone can Discharge Me from this obligation through your own generosity "•

Although as Lord and ruler of the universe He keeps all beings, gods, demons, Gandharvas (demi-gods) and men alike perpetually bound by the fetters of *Karma*, He allows Himself to be tied to the husking-stand by the milk-maid Yaśodā. The Lord of *Māyā*, Hari, who makes the entire creation dance to the tune of His *Māyā* loses the game in favour of His playmates and as a condition of the game plays the horse and carries the cowherd boys on His back! Blessed

• न पात्येऽहं निस्तपसंयुजां
स्वसायुक्त्यं वितुसायुतापि वः ।
या माभवन दुर्जरगेदृष्टरत्नाः
सदृश्यं तद्वः प्रतिपानु गानुना ॥

ज व क

wonders! The Lord, Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, whose grace even great gods like Indra, Brahmā and Śiva find it difficult to obtain, that Supreme *Brahma* is rolling in dust seeking to obtain a seat in your arms."*

God, the embodiment of Supreme Knowledge and Bliss, who makes the whole creation dance like a puppet tied to the strings of His *Māyā*, Himself dances in the courtyards of the Gopīs enchanted by their Love. Who can adequately praise their lot or describe the greatness of their Love? Says Rasakhan—

"Śeṣa (the serpent god), Mahēśa (Śiva), Gaṇeśa (the elephant-god), the Sun-god and Indra (the Lord of Paradise), on whom all these gods constantly meditate,

जावक

brothers (Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma) wherever they go. Having heard the sweet nectar-like stories of the Uplifter of the hill (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) all other nectar appears inferior in taste; Who will covet the other trivial pleasures of the world, when even the joy of liberation appears as unpalatable as salt?

Addressing Uddhava, whose one ambition was to be born as a creeper or a shrub or a herb in Vraja in order that the sacred dust of the feet of the Gopīs may fall on his head and who having accepted the discipleship of the Gopīs had assimilated the lofty sentiment of the Gopīs, the Lord said:—

"O Uddhava, neither Brahṃā, nor Śiva, nor Saṅkarsana, (Balarāma), nor again Lakṣmī, nay, not even My own soul is so dear to Me as are devotees like you".

This may have given the reader some idea about the spiritual greatness

of the Gopīs. How is it possible for a humble mortal like me to describe that Love which made the Gopī the dearest object of the Lord Himself? The eligibility for this Love is attained only after one has developed supreme indifference to the enjoyments of the world, and it is only through the grace of those exalted souls who have direct experience of the transcendent region

What is Love ?

Before attempting to probe into the mystery of the Gopis' Love it is necessary to discuss at some length the philosophy of Love itself. In reality Love is not something which can be expressed through words: that which can lend itself to description is the grossest and most external form of Love. The seat of Love is the heart; it transforms the lover into Love itself.

Bhagavān Śrī Rāma sent the following message of Love to Śrī Sītā:—

"O dear, the truth about the Love between You and Me is known only to My mind and that mind constantly stays with You. Know You that herein lies the essence of Love."

In Love there is no room for self-interest. Where there is any desire for return, there the purity of Love is stained

by lust, or desire for self-gratification. In Love there is giving and giving alone the thought of taking or receiving never occurs to the mind of the lover. Love, again, always tends to grow. A lover can never believe that his is a fully developed love he always sees his own limitations, his imperfections, and keeps the needle of his heart directed exclusively towards the beloved. Love that hinges round some virtue or expects something in return diminishes or disappears as soon it notices a decline in the virtues of the beloved or apprehends loss of expectation Love of this type is not love in the proper sense of the term It is love of self or desire for self-gratification that masquerades as love in that case

Kabir says—

“Now it swells and the very next
moment ebbs low, is not Love,
That alone which is firmly rooted
in the heart and knows no ebb
should be given the name of Love ”*

* छिनहि चटै छिन उतरै, सो तो प्रेम न होय ।
अघट प्रेम पिजर बमै, प्रेम कहावै सोय ॥

ज तक

Again, it is said:—

"An attraction between lovers which knows no extinction even in the presence of factors favourable to such extinction is called Love."*

For instance, suppose the object of our love loses his wealth, his beauty fades, his virtues give place to vices he ceases to reciprocate our love or show regard to us, snubs us at every step, offers insult to us and shows respect to others in our very presence or manifests thousands of evil tendencies Under such circumstances our love for our beloved is sure to disappear. This is our experience of Love as it is known in the world True love is that which does not diminish even in such conditions but goes on increasing everyday.

Says Rasakhan—

"That Love is the fountain of all sweetest which is not dependent on youth, virtue, beauty or wealth,

nor tainted by self-interest or
thoughts of personal gain, and which
is pure and free from desire (of
self-gratification)

Very subtle, very soft, very slender,
very remote, Love is the hardest
of all, constant, unvaried in sweetness,
brimful

All-sweetness, spontaneous, disinter-
ested, unwavering, sublime, unvaried
in sweetness, constantly growing,
such is pure love, O Rasakhan "

A poet says —

"Love constantly grows like the
waxing moon,
Only there is no full-moon here,
hence it never reaches the point
where it may be said to be full "*

This type of Love can grow only
in the heart of the devotee in relation
to God Devarsī Nārada while describing
the nature of this Love says —

"The nature of Love cannot be de-
scribed in words, like the experiences

* प्रेम सदा बढियो करे ज्यो ससि कला सुबेष ।
पै पूनो या मे नही, ताते कबहुँ न सेप ॥

जातक

of a dumb person This Love manifests itself in some rarely fortunate and qualified medium (viz, a devotee who has developed supreme indifference to worldly enjoyments) This Love is beyond the range of the three Gunas, is untainted by desire, constantly growing, ceaseless in flow, and very subtle it can be understood only by experience A devotee who attains this sees only this Love, hears only this, and thinks of this and this alone."

(*Harik. Supra 51 LL*)

There remains no distinction between the lover and the beloved in this state For, as the poet says.—

"Love is the essence of God, and
God is the embodiment of Love
Though one in essence, they appear
as two, like the sun and the
sunshine."*

It will not be out of place to reproduce below the utterances of some Hindi

० प्रेम हरी को नय है, लो हरि प्रेम मन्त्र ।
एक मोह है मैं लो, लो मन्त्र अह 'पू ॥

poets regarding the condition of the
Gopīs who had attained this highest
stage of Love.

“In whichever direction I look, I find
the landscape full of Śyāma (dark
blue).

The bowers and groves are dark,
the water of the Jamuna is dark,
the sky and clouds are dark.
All the colours are merged in the
dark colour, people say this is
something novel.

Am I mad, or the dark pupil of the
peoples' eyes is changed ?

The heart of the Moon and the
scion of the Sun are dark, the musk
is dark, as well as Cupid, the
conqueror of the world The neck of
the blue-necked Śiva is also dark,
as if the dark colour has been
broadcast all over the earth The
letters of the Vedas appear dark,
the point of the tapering light is
also dark

Not to speak of men and gods, the
Formless Brahma itself has assumed
a dark Form ”

“The ears went ahead of all, and lost
themselves in the stories of His glory,

जातः

lost
themselves in the nectarean beauty
So did the mind lose itself in the
smile, in the dance, in the furtive
glance, in the mirth, in the symmetry
of Form and in the sweetness of
disposition, even as water mixes
with milk
Enchanted by that Supreme
Enchanter, my mind has identified
itself with the Enchanter Himself
and no distinction, says Harichand,
is now visible between the two
Kṛṣṇa has entered into my very
life-breath, and the breath is sur-
charged with Kṛṣṇa
It cannot be perceived now whether
it is life that pulsates within, or
Kṛṣṇa that is throbbing in the heart "
"Wherever I turn my eyes, I find
Śyāma (Kṛṣṇa) and Śyāma alone
visible everywhere
In the streets, or the bathing ghats,
in the alleys, in the orchards, in the
trees, in the creepers, in the gardens,
in the groves, in the doorways, on
the walls, on the thresholds, on
the windows, in the gardens, in the
divanitis, in the rock-lounges in the
body, in the woodlands, in the
upper, in the Gopis, in the cows,

ज त क

transformed into mirrors. In whichever direction I look I find Thee and Thee alone, Pebbles, stones, and broken pieces of earthenware all have turned into so many looking-glasses "

The following is an anecdote connected with the Gopīs who saw Kṛṣṇa permeating the whole universe. One of these Gopīs asked another in the course of their talks about Kṛṣṇa, in which they remained engaged all the twenty-four hours—"Sister, here is a puzzle for me. The blessed Nanda has got a fair complexion, Queen Yaśodā is fair, even Balarāma is fair-complexioned; while all members of the family are fair, is it not strange that Śyāmasundara alone should have been dark-complexioned?" Hearing this the other Gopī, who beheld Kṛṣṇa everywhere replied—"Sister, what a shame? Don't you know even this?—

"He stays day and night within our eyes painted black by collirium, O friend, it is due to this that the body of our dearest is dark in colour "

The Nature of Gopis' Love

In the Love of the Gopīs there is no absence of passion; of course, that passion has withdrawn itself from all other objects of worldly attraction, and crossing the barriers of all allurements in the shape of liberation and, worldly enjoyments, which it is so difficult to surmount, has centred round Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone. The mind, the senses, the vital energy—all that the Gopīs possessed—belonged to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Whether in this world or in the next, the Gopīs knew no one else than Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Whether awake or asleep, at work or at recreation, whether engaged in dressing, toilet or in music, or in conversation, they

the Bliss aspect (महिनीशक्ति) of the All-Powerful God, who through the music of His flute draws that Aspect of His own, separated for sport, towards Himself. This aspect (Bliss) of God attended by Her subordinate forces is constantly being drawn towards the Lord, who tasting that Bliss distributes the same among those very forces—His beloved devotees. When the music of the Flute—the Master's Call—enters the ears of the devotee, he forgets his hearth and home and sacrificing every interest that may bind him, he runs like one possessed and intoxicated to make his beloved Lord happy. The Lord accepts this offering of his Love, and sanctifying it with His divine touch returns it to the devotee. When a person goes before a mirror after beautifying his person, the beauty reflected in the mirror is not retained by the mirror but always comes back to the person, and he himself becomes the enjoyer of that beauty. In a similar way the All-Beautiful Lord accepts the

offering of beauty of the Gopīs, and gives satisfaction to their desire, namely, that He should accept their physical service and make Himself happy through sports of Love with them. God enjoys that bliss Himself and returns it to them as His own offering after augmenting it to an enormous extent. The Love of the Gopīs had this distinction that they possessed not the slightest desire for self-gratification. They did not entertain the thought of personal happiness even in imagination. Finding Śrī Kṛṣṇa happy through their association, they remained merged in the ocean of bliss whether awake or in sleep. There was no stain of lust in this pure Love of the Gopīs, it was as spotless as the sun in a cloudless sky, it was purely divine and supernatural. Bringing out this difference between *Kāma* (lust) and *Prema* (Love) *Śrī Chaitanya Charitāmṛta* says —

"The object of *Kāma* is enjoyment through gratification of the senses, while *Prema* has the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa for its object. Social conven-

जात

tions, scriptural injunctions, and other *karma* (activity), sense of decorum, patience, comfort of body and happiness of mind, renouncing all these, they take to the worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They (the Gopīs) pursue this *Prema* for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa (not for their own gratification). Therefore, there is a world of difference between *kāma* and *Prema*. *Kāma* is pitch darkness, *Prema* is the brilliance of the sun in a cloudless sky."

This difference between *Kāma* and *Prema* is very wide and vital. We mortals deluded by the attractions of the senses forget this vital difference and mistaking *Kāma* for *Prema*, fall an easy prey to our sinful propensities. *Kāma* is honey mixed with poison, while *Prema* is divine, celestial nectar. While *Kāma* gives place immediately to pain, *Prema* through every experience of its pang gives the taste of nectarian bliss. In *Kāma* there is satisfaction and gratification of the senses, whereas in *Prema* there is absorption of Self, and an evergrowing desire for seeing the

beloved happy. The gratification of senses through satisfaction of *Kāma* (lust), though appearing sweet in the beginning, is painful in consequence, whereas *Prēma* (Love), though it knows no satiety, is the source of eternal and Supreme Bliss. *Kāma* is intermittent and spasmodic, while *Prēma* is continuous and uninterrupted. *Kāma* has a tendency to subside, but *Prēma* grows eternally. There is thirst for sense-enjoyment in *Kāma*, while in *Prēma* the senses and their enjoyments are entirely forgotten. The object of *Kāma* is gratification of the lower self through sense-enjoyment, while in *Prēma* there is complete renunciation of the world and complete forgetfulness of self.

ज तक

type of pure and unadulterated Love has no tinge of carnality about it. The *Gaulamiya Tantra* says:—

"Although the Love of the Gopīs goes by the name of *Kāma* (lust), in reality it is not so. Great devotees and Mahātmās like Uddhava yearn for this Love, miscalled lust."

For the Gopīs had absolutely no desire for gratification of their own senses. Knowing Śrī Kṛṣṇa to be God Himself, they sought to make Him happy by offering their entire being to Him. Referring to these Gopīs, who had absolutely no attraction for worldly enjoyments and who had merged their very existence in Śrī Kṛṣṇa, *Śrī Chaitanya Charitāmṛta* says—

"The object of *Kāma* is to gratify one's senses. To render happiness to Kṛṣṇa is the object of the adorable sentiment of the Gopīs. The Gopīs have no desire of happiness through gratification of senses, it is for the

॥ प्रेमेव गोप्यानां काम इव गमनं प्रयागम् ।

इन्द्रियादयोऽप्येते दान्ति न भवन्ति वा । ॥

happiness of Kṛṣṇa that they engage themselves in sports. The consideration of their own happiness or suffering does not weigh with the Gopīs at all, what they do, they do for the sake of happiness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Renouncing everything else, they cherish stainless Love for the happiness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

One who entertains pure love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa for the sake of His happiness, regarding his body, mind, wealth, beauty, youth and all that is enjoyable in this world and the next as objects of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment, is said to have attained Gopī-consciousness. The sentiment of sweetness is predominant in this Gopī-consciousness. The Rasas (sentiments) are five in number—(1) the sentiment of quietism (शान्त), (2) the sentiment of service (दास्य), (3) the sentiment of friendship (मैत्र्य), (4) the sentiment of parental affection (वात्सल्य) and (5) the sentiment of wifely love (माधुर्य). Each of these, again, is of two kinds according as it is worldly or divine. That is to say,

ज तव

worldly sentiments are five in number as stated above, and divine sentiments are also likewise five. Among these, the last-named, *viz.*, the sentiment of love is the highest, for the four other sentiments, *viz.*, those of quietism, service, friendship and parental affection are covered by this. Inasmuch as it is the noblest of all sentiments, it is the most delicious; hence it is called "sweet" (मधुर) Even so, among divine sentiments the sentiment of wifely love (कान्ताभाव) is the foremost of all. In the sentiments of quietism and service, the prevailing idea of the devotee is, "God is great and glorious, while I am humble and poor: God is the Lord and Master, and I am His slave" There is some amount of aloofness in this sentiment as well as an element of shyness and fear. But in the sentiments of friendship, parental affection and wifely love our relation with the Divine is progressively more and more intimate. He is our darling, our most beloved Lord. The Lord here forgets His Supreme greatness, casts

जातक

two varieties—(1) the love of the wedded wife, and (2) that of the paramour. In the worldly sphere the love of the paramour is deprecable, nay, detestable, for the same is contaminated by lust or a craving for physical union and gratification of the senses, and the object of love is an erring human being. But in the divine sphere, *तत्*, when the object of love is the Divine Himself, that type of love is not only worth cultivating but it is considered even superior to the love of the wedded wife. There is no grossness in this love, no craving for physical union or gratification of the senses. The object of love in this case is no human being transgressing the moral code, but the soul of the Universe, God Himself, the Oversoul, who is the soul alike of the devotee's husband and children, nay, of the devotee herself. It is in this sense that the love of the Gopīs is regarded as belonging to the latter type, the love of a paramour. Although a devoted wife surrenders her all—her personal and

ज व क

Your absence makes each moment appear to us as long as an aeon And when You return from the forest in the evening and we see Your blessed countenance adorned with the side-looks of curly hair, the Creator Brahmā, who created the eye-lids to cover the eyes with, appears to us no better than an awkward fool That is to say, our failure to see You even for a moment makes us uneasy "+

To have their minds constantly fixed on the Lord, to feel great agony on their failure to see Him even for a moment, and to have surrendered themselves completely to the Lord without the least grudge—these were the natural characteristics of the Gopis In comparison with the service of their dearest Lord, they attached no importance to any other duty. In their Love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa they had set at naught

* अदिति यद्वन्नानदि ताननं तृदियुगावसो त्वामपश्यताम् ।
तृदिल्लुप्तानं श्रीकृष्णं न वे जट उदीयता परमहृद् दृशाम् ॥

(५ म. १८ अ. १० श्लो. १०)

the restrictions imposed by society and the scriptures. Worldly enjoyments and salvation appeared to them as trivial and worthy of being rejected. The Lord Himself said —

“O Uddhava, the Gopis have dedicated their heart and soul to Me, snapping for My sake all their physical ties. I sustain those who renounce for My sake all worldly enjoyments and their means. A devotee who has thus surrendered his whole being to Me covets not the position of Brahmā, the position of Indra, the position of an Emperor, sovereignty over the nether regions, the eight Siddhis (mystic powers) of Yoga, nay, not even salvation, where there is no return to this world, apart from Me ”*

भन्मनस्का मत्प्राणा मदर्थे त्यक्तदैहिकाः ।
त्यक्तलोकधर्माश्च मदर्थे तान् बिभर्म्यहम् ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X 46 4)

जातिः

Now mark what the Lord says with reference to devotees of this type:—

"To sanctify Myself with the dust of their feet, I constantly follow the footsteps of such devotees."†

That is the reason why the author of the *Gīta-Govinda* made the Lord appear as yearning for Śrī Rādhā's sacred feet and utter the words "Give Me the privilege of touching Thy gentle feet" It is on the basis of this very utterance that the renowned devotee Rāsakhan, who had drunk deep of this sweet sentiment, wrote:—

"I sought the Divine (*Brahma*) in the Purānas and songs and listened with still greater fervour the hymns of the Vedas.
"But nowhere did I perceive Him, or hear what His true Form is, and what His nature.
"I got tired through this search yet no man or woman could furnish any clue to Him, says Rāsakhan

० अनुप्रजाम्यद् निदं पूयेत्तत्पुत्रेणुभिः ।

ज त क

the Gopīs reached the highest stage of perfection. All the five Rasas (sentiments) were brought into play there, although the sentiment of love was predominant. This sentiment of love gradually develops into fondness, affection, anger (मान), passion (रग) and fully developed love and reaches the highest stage known by the name of *Bhāva* (ecstatic love). The perfection of this last stage is called supreme ecstasy of love (महामाव). This supreme ecstasy of love was manifested in the blessed Gopīs alone. The All-Blissful Lord enacted this absolutely divine and transcendent sport of Love in Vraja in order to satisfy the heart's desire of His devotees who sought nothing but Love from their Beloved. He did not enact this sacred *Līlā* for the sake of enjoyment or for the satisfaction of the sexual desire of the Gopīs. There could be no desire for enjoyment in the All-Blissful Lord nor could there be any trace of lust in the Gopīs. Nay, this *Līlā* was enacted in order to

destroy the seed of lust in the hearts of worldly men. While concluding the description of the Rāsa-dance in the *Bhāgavata*, the great ascetic Śukadeva said —

“Men of wisdom who hear or read this story of love-sport of the damsels of Vraja with Bhagavān Viṣṇu (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) will soon attain supreme devotion to the Lord and will be rid of the disease of the heart known by the name of lust ”*

The sport of which the mere story when read or heard with reverence and with an understanding mind kills the sexual impulse and bestows the gift of transcendent devotion (परमक्ति)—to detect the existence of sexual passion in the hero of this sport, Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and in the heroines, His beloved

* विव्रीडितं ब्रजवधूभिरिदं च विष्णोः

श्रद्धान्वितोऽनुशृणुयादथ वर्णयेद्यः ।

भक्तिं परां भगवति प्रतिलभ्य कामं

हृद्रोगमाश्वपहिनोत्यचिरेण धीरः ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X 33 40)

Gopīs, or to imagine any illicit connection between them is nothing but an aberration of intellect of men engrossed in worldly pleasures and carnality. That the sport of the Lord in Vraja was most sacred, is very well-known to all devotees following the path of Love; that was the reason why a celestial sage like Nārada and the greatest of Gods, Śiva, were initiated into the Gopī-consciousness to participate in that sport. The great sage Śukadeva narrated the story of this to king Parīkṣit, who was awaiting his death, in order to enable the latter to attain this transcendent devotion without much difficulty, and realize God after knowing the ultimate truth about Him. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa also while describing the stages of Knowledge finally leading to transcendent devotion, says—

“When man endowed with pure Reason, dwelling in solitude, abstemious in food, with mind, speech and body subdued, firmly established in dispassion, constantly

जातक

On a careful examination, all the above stages will be found in their complete state of development in the Gopīs. There can be no better proof of the purity of their Reason than the fact that their Reason was constantly attached to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Dwelling in solitude, not only physically but also mentally, with a view to obtaining the contact of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, forgetting even food and drink, withdrawing the mind, speech and body from worldly objects and applying them to the service of the Beloved Lord, absence of attraction for objects of enjoyment, remaining constantly engaged in meditation of the beloved Śrī Kṛṣṇa, keeping the heart full of Śrī Kṛṣṇa by installing His image therein, renunciation of all objects of senses excepting those connected with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, absence of attraction for and repulsion from objects in the worldly sense; laying down egoism, violence, arrogance, lust, anger and the sense of possession at the feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, absence of attachment not only

ज तक

has obtained enlightenment through Knowledge) lay in this that while the realization of the latter is based only on pure Reason, in the case of the former all their experiences were based on direct perception through the senses. The Supreme *Brahma* of the Jñānīs assumed a supremely beautiful and enchanting Form possessing two arms and, holding the flute in one hand, danced with His devotees. Stealing the hearts of His devotees by His transcendent Beauty and drawing them by the music of the flute, He called them unto Him and blessed them in every sense. A well-known *Mohātmā* who had been blessed with divine vision and had entered into the spirit of the Gopīs said —

"O friend, hear a strange story To-day I saw *Brahmā*, the highest truth of the *Veśānta*, dancing in the courtyard of Nanda bemastered all over with dust raised by the hoofs of cows"

० शृणु मणिः कान्तुयमेतं नन्दनिवेताग्ने मया दृष्टम् ।
मोक्षं निगमन्तो गन्धति वेदान्तसिद्धान्तः ॥

The Charm of Sri Krishna's Beauty.

Who can properly describe the transcendent charm of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Beauty? On whomsoever He cast even a single love-laden glance, on him He showered the nectar of Love which made him immortal; He would remove all his attraction for the world, and plant him into the region of His love. Says Śrī Jagannatha, the celebrated Sanskrit poet of the Moghul period—

"O my Self ! in your own interest I give you this warning Never make the mistake of cultivating friendship with that child, the cowherd of Brindaban, who possesses the hue of a newly-formed cloud, bewitching you by His playful smile which showers nectar in the form of an ethereal beauty. He will rob you in

no time of all your beloved objects
of the world."*

Even Madhusūdana Saraswatī, the celebrated author of the *Advaita-Siddhi* (which contains a masterly exposition of Advaita philosophy), had to fall from his high pedestal of Self-sovereignty (the state of *Jīvanmukti*, living freedom from worldly bondage) fascinated by the transcendent glow of that unearthly beauty. He says —

"Respected and adored by the followers of the path of *Advaita* and having obtained passport to ascend the throne of Self-sovereignty, I was made to surrender my all (though much against my will) at the feet of that urchin who constantly follows the footsteps of the cowherd-maids (of Brindaban) " |

* रे चेतः कथयामि ते हितमिदं वृन्दावने चारयन्
वृन्द कोऽपि गवा नवाम्बुदनिभो बन्धुर्न कार्यस्त्वया ।
सौन्दर्यामृतमुद्रिरन्द्रिरभितः सम्मोह्य मन्दस्मितै-
रेष त्वा तव वल्लभाश्च विप्रयानाशु क्षयं नेष्यति ॥

| अद्वैतवीथीपथिकैरुपास्याः

स्वाराज्यसिंहासनलब्धदीक्षाः ।

गटेन केनापि वयं हटेन
दासीकृता गोपवधूविटेन ॥

जात

सक

Afraid of the bewitching beauty of the child Krsna, the famous devotee 'Lila'uka' (Bilvamangala) warns people against His magic in the following words—

"O wayfarer! do not go that way
That lane is a terrible lane The
naked child standing there resting
His hands on His hips, possessing a
hue similar to that of the Tamala
leaves, only appears like an arcotia,
in truth He is a great robber who
robs every traveller passing that
way of his heart ".

Sah Kundanlal entering into the spirit of the Gopis, says under the assumed name of Lalitaki'ori—

"I make an offering of these eyes to
His moon-like face, as the Chakora
bird (famous for its love for the
moon) offers itself to the moon.

* मा यात पाप्माः पथि भीमरथ्या
त्रिमयः कोऽपि गमालनीलः ।
विन्दन्महमोऽपि नितम्बविन्दे
धनः नमार्थति चित्तविन्द ॥

I offer life itself to the sweet smile
and beautiful teeth of the darling,
to His slanting glances and the
corners of His eyes.

I offer the mind to the beautiful
Forms of Śyāmā and Śyāma (the
Eternal Pair), to their meeting in
the inner chamber, and the rapid
movement created by the rhythm of
their Rāsa-dance.

Supremest Beauty shines in the Form
of this Darling with three curves in
the Body

I offer my all to the beautiful bend
of His neck '*

Even though all that the devotee
possesses is offered to Him, yet He

॥ नैन चकोर मुख चदहू पै वारि डारौ,
वारि डारौ चित्तिहि मनमोहन चितचोर पै ।
प्रानहू को वारि डारौ हँसन दसन लाल,
हेरन कुटिलता औ लोचन की कोर पै ॥
वारि डारौ मनहि सुअग अग स्यामा स्याम,
महल मित्यप रस रास की झकोर पै ।
अतिहि सुघर दर सोहत त्रिभगीलाल,
सरवस वारौ वा ग्रीवा की मरोर पै ॥

जातक

will continue to inflict wounds on a loving devotee through the spear of His oblique glances. And stealing looks at him, again and again, He goes on sprinkling salt on the wound by His sweet smiles. Lalitakiñori further says —

“Look here, friend, this wayward lad of Nanda goes hurling His darts in the shape of His oblique glances. Seeing me wounded, cruel-hearted, He merrily smiles
Says Lalitakiñori, He sprinkles salt on the wound of my heart.”*

This wound of the devotee's heart inflicted by the oblique glances of Śyāma (Kṛṣṇa) never dries up, it remains ever green, and the acute pain he feels every moment gives him greater joy than even the bliss of absorption

ॐ देवों की यह नट का छोग बगली मागे जाना है ।
बगली-सी-निरली नितवन की पैनी छुरी नाला है ॥
हमको पावल देल वेदवटी मंड मंड बुगलाला है ।
‘ललितकिञ्जोरी’ जलाम जलार पर नीन-पूरी बुगलाला है ॥

जातक

The Blessed Flute of the Lord and His Rasa-dance.

Equally fascinating is the magic flute of the Lord. When it sounds, even the trance of Yogīs established in the highest state of abstract *Samādhi* is disturbed, to say nothing of ordinary souls.

As soon as the sound of this magic flute breaks forth it infuses life into dead matter and stupefies living beings. A Gopī, while singing the glory of the flute once sarcastically said:—

"O Murāri, pray spare me the melody of Your magic flute at least for the time I am busy in the kitchen, for as soon as those dulcet notes enter the kitchen, the dry pieces of wood that I use as fuel become wet and begin to drip with water, so that the fire is extinguished and I am undone."*

ॐ मुग्धं रत्नचर्मयं मा कुरु मुग्धलीरयं मधुरम् ।
नीरममेघं रसगं कृमानुष्पेति हृत्प्रातस्तमम् ॥

Hearing the flute sounding at a distance one Gopī says to another —

“Do you hear it, friend, haste back home, (else) you will be pierced by the darts from His eyes. This flute, says Niwaj, is full of poison and injects poison into the heart,
O innocent lady, you forget yourself hearing the sweet music, If you want to save the family honour, put finger into both your ears ’*’

The treatment of Gopīs’ love will remain incomplete without some reference to the Divine Flute and the Rāsa-dance in which the Gopīs participated.

* सुनती हौ कहा, भजि जाहु घरै,
बिंध जाओगी नैन के बानन मे ।
यह बसी ‘निवाज’ भरी बिष सो
बगरावति है विष प्रानन मे ॥
अबही सुधि भूलिहौ भोरि भट्ट,
भँवरौ जब मीठी सी तानन मे ।
बुलकानि जो आपनि राखि चहौ,
दे रहौ अँगुरी दोउ कानन मे ॥

जातक

We propose, therefore, to deal with these two points now.

On the day the Lord granted the boon to the Gopīs who had worshipped Goddess Kātyāvanī with the object of attaining utmost nearness to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord tested the purity and exclusiveness of Love of the Gopīs by robbing them of their garments. Thus divesting them of all sense of separateness and finding them worthy of treading the path of stainless Love, He gave them assurance of union. To scent sin in the sport of robbing the clothes of the Gopīs is an indication of the sinful condition of the mind which scents it. The individual soul (*Ātmā*) cannot afford to have any privacy with the Oversoul (*Paramātmā*). The veil between the individual soul and the *Paramātrā* exists only in *Māyā*. Who will like to conceal his parts from the Lord Himself, who is the Soul of all souls? So long as one attempts to do so, he does not recognize the ubiquity of the *Paramātrā*, and is, therefore,

anxious to preserve intact his consciousness of individuality. This delusion of the Gopīs was dispelled by the removal of their clothes. They recognized Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the *Paramātmā*, and at once removing the veil of their separate individuality as Jīvas, and shaking off the cloak of *Māyā*, they came face to face with the Lord, the innermost soul of all that exists, in their naked purity.

Sometime after this incident the autumnal full moon appeared on the eastern horizon. The appointed time for meeting the Lord drew near. The cool and delightful autumnal night, blooming flowers and the nectarean silvery rays scattered by the orb of the full moon, all these combined to excite a hidden desire in the hearts of the Gopīs, and they began to crave for something which is ordinarily unobtainable. This craving was for union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Just then the maddening flute of Śrī Kṛṣṇa sounded. The blessed and delightful music evoking Love that enchants the

जात

universe started its career from the sweet flute of the Enchanter, delighting in Self, completely gratified and eternally young, the Lord of the lords of Yoga, the transcendent Dancer. The great sage, Śrī Śukadeva, says:—

"As soon as that love-excitng (excitng desire for union with Śrī Kṛṣṇa) music entered their ears, the minds of all the damsels of Vraja became full of Kṛṣṇa. They immediately left their work and started to meet their dearest Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On account of excessive eagerness none of them attempted to seek the company of fellow-girls during this night excursion (Forgetting everything else, they ran post-haste individually from whatever condition they were at that time) They ran so quickly that all the way the beautiful rings in their ears chook and moved "•

ॐ निशम्य गीतं नदनह्वयर्धन

ननम्रियः कृष्णगद्गीतमानसाः ।

आजगमुन्योन्यमलक्षितोत्तमाः

स यत्र गन्तो ज्वलन्कुण्डलाः ॥

(ॐ नमः शिवाय ॥ १००० ॥)

जातः

"O blessed girls, welcome to you all. Pray let Me know if I can be of any service to you. Is it all well with Vraja? May I know the reason for your coming here at this odd hour?"*

Hearing this from the lips of the Lord the Gopis only smiled; they did not give any reply. The Lord again said:—

"Look here, lasses, the night is dreadful. Many ferocious animals roam about at this hour. Therefore, hanto back to Vraja forthwith. It is not proper for women to tarry here for long"†

Even now the Gopis did not give any reply. The Lord again said—

* स्वागतं वो मयाभागाः प्रिय किं करुणाणि यः ।
प्रश्नस्यानामयं कश्चिद् वृत्तायामनकारणम् ॥

("Chait. Chandroka" ३. ३३१-३३२)

| स्वान्देया द्यौरूपा द्यौरुत्तमनिर्दिता ।
प्रनियान् प्रजं नेह स्थेयं स्त्रीभिः मुमक्षमाः ॥

("Chait. Chandroka" ३. ३३३-३३४)

ज तक

The Love of the Gopīs for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was roused by the beauty of the moonlit night. Was this an earthly or a divine impulse? In order to test this, the Lord again said:—

"You have seen the charming beauty of Brindāban, illumined by the silvery beams of the queen of the Night and adorned by beautiful lilies and new leaves shaking by the mild, cool breeze coming from the Jamuna. Now, O virtuous ladies, tarry not, quickly return to Vraja and engage yourselves in the service of your respective husbands. Your children and the small calves may be crying for you, so, give the children suck and milk the cows."*

What work can be more important for a virtuous woman than service of

* दृष्टं वनं कुमुदितं गणेशकरजितम् ।
यमुनानिल-मिन्दुजानकपद्मजीवितम् ॥
तथात मा निमं गोष्ठं शुभ्रधनं पतितं गयीः ।
मन्दन्ति यत्ना वादयन्तं तान् पादयन्तं दूयन् ॥

(Anant Kṛṣṇa's X 1116 1171)

जातक

But—

“O blessed ladies! the highest duty of woman is to serve her husband and his friends with a sincere heart and nurse her children. A woman who desires a higher life after death should never abandon her husband who has not fallen from the path of virtue, even if he is ill-tempered, unlucky, old, ignorant, poor or is suffering from some malady. It is in every sense despicable for a woman of noble birth to serve a paramour, such a conduct does not lead to heaven, on the contrary it leads to infamy. It is something extremely loathsome and reprehensible.”*

The Lord told them everything plainly. If taking Him to be a human

* भर्तुः शुश्रूषण स्त्रीणां परो धर्मो ह्यमायया ।
तद्वन्धूनां च कल्याण्यः प्रजानाञ्चानुपोषणम् ॥
दुःशीलो दुर्मगो वृद्धो जडो रोग्यधनोऽपि वा ।
पतिः स्त्रीभिर्न हातव्यो लोकेप्सुभिरपातकी ॥
अस्वर्ग्यमयशस्यं च फल्गु कृच्छ्रं भयावहम् ।
जुगुप्सितं च सर्वत्र औपपत्यं कुलस्त्रियाः ॥

(X xxix 24—26)

being they had approached Him to satisfy their lust, they would go down to hell and would expose themselves to infamy in the world. For such is the moral code laid down in the Vedas. These words of advice also could not dislodge the Gopīs. Then, with a view to testing them further, the Lord said —

(Even if you have come with a sense of My divinity then I may tell you) "Love for Me does not grow by closer proximity to Me as it does through hearing of My glory, obtaining My *Dasana* (sight), meditation on My form and loud chanting (*kīrtana*) of My Names. Therefore, go back to your homes "

ज तक

realized that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was God Himself, but they still had attraction for their homes. The Gopīs, however, had completely detached themselves from the world and were fully cognizant of the Lord's greatness. They knew the Lord was the soul of the whole universe—their own soul, the soul of their husbands and their children, the soul of all. The idea of illicit love cannot be conceived in relation to God, the soul of creation. The all-knowing and all-blissful Lord who is sought by the greatest of sages and seers, ascetics and saints, for whose sake they snap all ties of the world and become indifferent to the pleasures of the world, that Paramātmā Himself is directly present before them in the Form of their dearest Love and they have placed themselves at His sacred feet. Would it not be an act of sheer folly to leave Him, and go elsewhere? Therefore, the Love-intoxicated Gopīs with tears in their eyes, sobbing through Love-anger, said —

'O All-pervading Lord! these harsh words do not besit You Renouncing everything else our hearts have now become solely attached to Your sacred feet Therefore, just as the prime Purusa Śrī Nārāyaṇa takes all seekers of salvation under His protection, please accept us in the same way, do not leave us in the lurch O Kṛṣṇa, You know the essence of virtue (Is it not the greatest of virtues to take shelter under Your feet being a knower of the essence of virtue, how dare You ask us return?) You told us just now that the principal duty of a woman was to serve the husband,

ज तक

Yadu for the protection of the world '*

Pray do not try to deceive us You are the Paramātmā Himself. Without Thee none can exist—neither husband nor children nor anyone else. Refuge of all, end of all, substratum of all virtues, Lord of even the highest

* मैवं विभोऽर्हति भवान् गदितुं नृशंसं
सन्त्यज्य सर्वविपर्यस्तव पादमूलम् ।
भक्ता भजस्व दुरवग्रह मा त्यजास्मान्
देवो यथाऽऽदिपुरुषो भजते मुमुक्षून् ॥
यत्पत्यपत्यसुहृदामनुवृत्तिरङ्ग
स्त्रीणां स्वधर्म इति धर्मविदा त्वयोक्तम् ।
अस्त्वेवमेतदुपदेशपदे त्वयीगे
प्रेष्ठो भवास्तनुभृता किल बन्धुरात्मा ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X xxix. 31, 32)

न खलु गोपिकानन्दनो भवा-
नखिलदेहिनामन्तरात्महक् ।
विखनसार्थितो विश्वगुप्तये
सख उदेयिवान् सात्वतां कुले ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X. xxxi 4)

ज त क

How shall we return home, and
going there what shall we do ?*

God tested His devotees. They
came out successful in the test. Then
the boon sought for by them was
granted to them. The Divine Lord of
the Masters of Yoga, though rejoicing
in Self, sported with the Gopis. Then
for a time the Lord disappeared from
the scene, and the Gopis sorely missing
the Lord began to look about for Him
and lament in various ways

The Poet-saint Nandadas says:—

“From bower to bower they roamed
about in quest of the merciful Lord,
Failing to discover the Lord of the
heart, the damsels of Vraja were
sore distressed.

Smitten by pangs of separation they

* कुर्वन्ति हि त्वयि रतिं कुशलाः स्व आत्मन्
नित्यप्रिये पतिसुतादिभिरार्तिदैः किम् ।
तन्नः प्रसीद परमेश्वर मा स्म छिन्द्या
आशां भृता त्वयि चिरादरविन्दनेत्र ॥
चित्तं सुखेन भवतापहृतं गृहेषु
यन्निर्विशत्युत करावपि गृह्यकृत्ये ।
पादौ पदं न चलतस्तव पादमूला-
द्यामः कथं व्रजमथो करवाम किं वा ॥

(Śrīmad Bhagavata X xxix 33, 34)

जातक

Nanda's darling to whom the world
pays its homage
O friends, ask the creepers which
are blossoming profusely
Without the touch of our handsome
Lord such flower cannot appear!
Hallo friend doe, Aye, why don't
you ask these does ?
Their bright eyes indicate that they
have seen Hari somewhere just now
O the delicious fragrance of the forest
trees wafted by the mild breeze!
It appears our dear Lord, who is
the abode of Bliss, and the allayer
of pain, has cast His looks at them
O blooming Champaka, you possess a
rare charm !
Pray, let us know where is Hari
who sports in the bowers ?
O Kadamba, Nimba and mango trees,
have you taken a vow of silence ?
If so, why ?
O exalted Banyan ! pray furnish a
clue to that handsome hero
O Ásoka, remove our sorrow and
tell us where is our dear Lord, the
jewel among men
O breadfruit tree, blessed and sweet !
give these dying women nectar to
drink

जातक

Śiva and Laksmī, place the particles of this dust with reverence on their heads, let us also do the same '*

So saying they completely lost their consciousness in Śrī Kṛṣṇa and began to imitate the various sports of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

After this the Lord appeared on the scene again, and manifesting as many forms as there were Gopīs, He danced simultaneously with everyone of them.

The first verse describing the Rāsa-dance runs as follows —

“The Lord sought to enjoy Himself with the help of His Yogamāyā ”†

Then we find in the *Bhāgavata* expressions like ‘आत्मारामोऽप्यरीरमत’ (though

* धन्या अहो अमी आत्स्यो गोविन्दाद्भ्यञ्जरेणवः ।

यान् ब्रह्मेणो रमा देवी दधुर्मूर्ध्न्यधनुत्तये ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X २२२ 29)

† भगवानपि ता रात्रीः शरदोत्फुल्लमल्लिकाः ।

वीक्ष्य रन्तुं मनश्चक्रे योगमायामुपाश्रितः ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X २२१ 1)

जाति-

Carnality and illicit love cannot be conceived to exist in one who possesses these divine qualities. The Lord enacted the whole of this scene through the help of His Yogamāyā. The Lord is eternally pledged to fulfil the desires of His devotees; through His Yogamāyā things appeared to each one of His devotees as he or she would have them. It is through the power of this Yogamāyā (the Lord's own eternal divine energy), that the Lord though unattached, carries on His sports of creation, preservation and destruction. Just as a magician hypnotizes his spectators at will and conjures up scenes of his own choice before them, in the same manner the Lord enacted various sports through Yogamāyā Śrī Rādhā was the embodied form of Yogamāyā. Another form of Yogamāyā He sent ahead of Himself to inform Kamsa about his advent, and through her help subsequently the Lord enacted the whole drama of divine sports in Vraja. When Brahmā stole the cowherd

boys and calves, Śrī Kṛṣṇa who was then to all appearances a child of five assumed Himself through the power of this Yogamāyā the forms of those cowherd boys and calves together with all their paraphernalia--clothes, horns, sticks, etc. At the age of six, through the power of the same Yogamāyā, He subdued the terrible snake Kālīya and drank off the forest conflagration. At the same age He enacted the sport of stealing the robes of the cowherd-maids of Vraja (who sought Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their husband) in order to lift the veil of *Māyā* that screened them from the Lord and develop their capacity for complete surrender. It was through the influence of His Yogamāyā that Śrī Kṛṣṇa when He was only a child of seven years appeared as a grown up lad to the eyes of the damsels of Vraja. It was through the power of this Yogamāyā, again, that the Lord appeared as sporting within the ring of the Rāsa-dance. It was through this Yogamāyā that each Gopī in the ring

जातः

perceived the Lord of Gopīs beside her. Just as a child plays at its will with its reflection in a mirror, even so with the help of His Yogamāyā Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa sported with the Gopīs, who were like so many shadows of His own form.*

And it was through the action of the same Yogamāyā that the husbands of the girls who had gone to join the Rāsa-dance found their wives sleeping beside them.†

It was through the influence of the Yogamāyā, again, that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, a child of eleven years only, appeared differently to different persons when He entered the open court of Kāṁsa. To the wrestlers He appeared as hard as the hardest stone, to the citizens of Mathura He appeared as a superman,

* रेमे रमेशो ब्रजमुन्दरीभिर्यथार्भकः स्वप्रतिविम्बविभ्रमः ।

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X 83 17)

† मन्यमानाः स्वपाङ्ग्वस्थान् स्वान् स्वान् दारान् ब्रजौकसः ॥

(*Srimad Bhagavata* X 83 13)

to women He appeared as the God of Love Himself, the Gopas saw Him as their kinsman, the wicked kings as their chastizer, His parents saw Him as their darling, Kamsa saw Him as Death itself, the ignorant regarded Him as a monster, the Yogīs saw Him as the Supreme Reality, and the Yādavas saw Him as the supreme deity

It was a divine sport of Love between God Himself, who is all-sufficient and all-powerful, who is the Lord of the masters of *Yoga* and possesses the six divine attributes, who is the director of *Yogamāyā* (who is capable of bringing the impossible into the region of possibility), the master of supreme bliss and a veritable wish-yielding tree, on the one hand, and His devotees who were His own shadows, on the other.

In reality, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is always inseparable from Śrī Rādhā. Śrī Rādhā is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's own bliss aspect which assumes a separate body in

जातक

order to enjoy the transcendent love and beauty of the Lord; and the Gopīs, who are the eternal friends and associates of Śrī Rādhā, are none else than so many manifestations of a particular class of infinite energies (Śaktis) whose office is to help and supplement His bliss aspect. These Gopīs, again, are subdivided into various groups or orders such as friends (सखी), associates (सहेली), companions (सहचरी), messengers (दूतिका) and maids (दासी). Śrī Kṛṣṇa embodies supreme Beauty and supreme Love. Therefore, He is known as the Lord of Rasa (sweetness or joy), the Charmer of Cupid, One who puts to shame crores of Cupids in point of loveliness of form, the original seed or progenitor of the god of love, the divine and eternally fresh source of delight, solidified Knowledge and Bliss and the Supreme Puruṣa (Person). And Śrī Rādhā is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's transcendent Energy (परा प्रकृति) charmed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beauty and love, the embodi-

ment of devotion to and attachment for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoys His own Beauty and sweetness through this, His own Energy This is the basis of Love between Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Rasa, and Śrī Rādhā, who enjoys that *Rasa* (sentiment of joy and sweetness). This is not earthly love, it is never revealed in the region of ordinary mortals. That is why *Śrī Chaitanya-Charitāmṛta* says:—

“In the paramour-sentiment, *Rasa*
 (the feeling of joy and love) is
 strung to the highest pitch
 Except in Vraja, it is nowhere
 revealed”*

‘Vraja’ here means the divine region of Goloka which is sustained on the sentiment of Love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. It is therefore that the Lord of Vraja and the Master of *Rasa*, Śrī

* परकीया भावे अति रसेर उल्लास ।
 ब्रज विना इहार अन्यत्र नाहि वास ॥

जात-

Kṛṣṇa, never goes even a step beyond the boundary of this transcendent Brindāban.*

Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is pure Consciousness, pure Bliss, pure Love, pure *Rasa* (enjoyment), and these Gopīs, the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, are nothing but embodiments of consciousness, bliss, love and emotion in their purest forms. By Gopīs are meant Śrī Rādhā, or the bliss aspect of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Her companions, who are eternally engaged in bringing about the union of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and who through that effort enjoy happiness which is even intenser in experience than the bliss enjoyed by Śrī Rādhā. These do not possess earthly bodies of the type we mortals possess, made of flesh and blood, conceived in *Prakṛti* and created out of its elements, which take birth as a result of past *Karma* for the experience of pleasure and pain. They are eternal;

* वृन्दावनं परित्यज्य पादमेकं न गच्छति ।

although manifested in creation and sporting in the world of Death, they live in the state where death is transcended Their divine forms and their eternal Rāsa-dance can be perceived only by divine eyes through which overflows the purest sentiment of Love

In the *Padma-Purāṇa* the Lord Himself says to Śrī Mahādeva with reference to Śrī Rādhā and the Gopīs —

"Śrī Rādhā is My beloved—know Her to be the supreme Goddess Surrounding Her and behind Her are lakhs of Her female companions Just as My own form is eternal, they too are eternal My parents, friends, the cows and cowherds of Brindaban and Brindaban itself are eternal and made of the purest elements of Consciousness and Bliss. Know this Brindaban of Mine to be the very essence of Bliss"*

* इमा तु मत्प्रिया विद्धि राधिका परदेवताम् ।
अस्याश्च परितः पश्चात् सख्यः शतसहस्रशः ॥

जातः

In the *Rasollāsa Tantra*, Śrī Śiva says to Devī Pārvatī referring to the Rāsa-dance:—

"Just as there are the gross, subtle and causal bodies of men, even so there is a fourth species known as the *Bhāva-Deha* (body made of the purest Love), this body is attained through God's grace, and is easily obtained from birth to birth through His grace. This *Bhāva-Deha* is generally possessed by liberated souls who have the privilege of eternally waiting upon the Lord, or by the Lord's own representatives whose function is to carry out God's purpose on earth. Or, occasionally, O supreme Goddess, this body may be attained by a soul even by spiritual discipline. This *Bhāva-Deha* is neither subject to Gunas (due to

नित्याः सर्वा इमा रुद्र यथाहं नित्यविग्रहः ।
सखायः पितरो गोपा गावो वृन्दावनं मम ॥
सर्वमेतन्नित्यमेव चिदानन्दरसात्मकम् ।
इदमानन्दकन्दाख्यं विद्धि वृन्दावनं मम ॥

(*Padma Purana, Patala-Kharḍa* 51. 72-75)

Privilege and Duty

It has, however, to be specially borne in mind that none else than the Lord Himself can conduct this sport. The privilege of worshipping God through the sentiment of the Gopīs is open to all Jīyas who have developed dispassion and pure Love. It is not confined to women alone, nor is it necessary for men who desire to cultivate this love, to dress themselves as women. What is necessary is to accept the Gopīs as the model of this love, and to stimulate within one's heart the kind of love possessed by them. It is the proper attitude of mind and not a particular form of dress that counts in this form of worship. He alone that possesses this divine, disinterested and undivided Love, may worship God through the sentiment of

जातक

transcendent region has to show his permit to the divine lady who keeps watch at the gate. This permit, again, which is nothing else than an intellect immersed in the nectar of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's love, can be obtained by him alone who surrenders his body, mind and possessions to the beloved Lord, who renounces all his desires, who has subdued all his passions such as lust, anger, greed, and so on, and clothed with dispassion and adorned with divine virtues, offers himself as sacrifice at the altar of Love. A Hindi poet says.—

"First he offers his head, then he
enters,
Such a noble Lover alone can enter
this region."*

Therefore, no human being can ever play the role of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in this *Līlā*, no matter if he is believed to be a great religious preceptor (Āchārya),

* प्रथम सीम अर्पण करे, पाछे कंगे प्रवेश ।
ऐसे प्रेमी सुजन को है प्रवेश यहि देस ॥

जातक

Vraja, who possess the Divine Love which was once manifested in Vraja. It is only by dedicating oneself at the feet of the blessed Gopīs and attuning oneself with the sentiment of the Gopīs that one can attain this rare Divine Love, which does not possess the least trace of lust or desire for enjoyment, and the object and embodiment of this Love, the swarthy-complexioned Śrī Kṛṣṇa of rare beauty. *Śrī Chaitanya-Charitāmṛta* says —

"One who seeks to possess this
nectar-like sentiment of the Gopis,
Spurning the Vedic laws, he
 worships Kṛṣṇa,
He alone who worships Him
 through Love and attachment,
Gets in Vraja the company of the
Darling of the blessed Lord of Vraja "

The poet says —

५. सेइ गोपीभावामृते जॉर लोभ हय,
वेदधर्म नर्व त्यजि मेट कृष्णोरे भजय ।
रागानुगामार्गें भजे जेट जन,
सेइ जत पाय व्रजे व्रजेन्द्रनन्दन ॥

A true lover does not repudiate the Vedic laws, on the contrary, when Divine Love manifests itself in him the Vedic laws themselves leave their hold on him, knowing that he has attained that Love in which lies their supreme fulfilment. He who deliberately repudiates the Vedic laws is bound to suffer a spiritual fall

"There is one law governing this
Love, namely, that laws no longer
bind the votary
But he who repudiates the laws
knowingly, does not possess this
Love"*

This path is not for those who hanker after sensual pleasures, nor is it meant for those who simply put on the garb of a devotee. This sacred path is trodden by those selfless souls who having conquered the attractions of the world and curbed all desires seek to worship God alone Any attempt

* एक नेम यह प्रेम को, नेम सबै छुटि जाहि ।
पै जो छोडै जानि कै, तहाँ प्रेम कछु नाहिं ॥

जातक

on the part of those who entertain in their hearts the craving for enjoyment to tread this path would be as dangerous as to leap into a blazing fire, or to put one's finger into the mouth of a deadly snake. The poet again says —

“One who seeks to drink the nectar of Love and is yet attached to the enjoyments of the world will find that the poisonous effect of this attachment spreads throughout his system, burns his heart and shatters his whole frame.”*

That is why Śrī Śukadeva warns all against this danger when he says —

“Śrī Śiva drank off the deadly poison, everyone cannot do it, in the same manner God Himself enacted this sport (of the Rūsa-dance), man can never imitate this act of His. A frail mortal should never therefore even think of imitating this sport. Anyone attempting this through foolishness

* प्रेम अभिय पीवो चहै, करै विषय सो नेह ।
विष व्यापै, जारै हिये, करै जरजरित देह ॥

will surely perish God is the soul of the Gopīs as well as of their husbands, nay of all embodied beings. He dwells in the heart of everyone as the witness, it was by way of sport that He appeared on this earth in human form, and in order to shower His grace on the mortals inhabiting this globe enacted these supernatural sports through that Divine Body so that men may get devoted to Him by dwelling on those sports in their minds '*

Therefore, instead of imitating these supernatural sports of the Lord one should place before him the ideal of the Gopīs, and, offering his all to God, should serve him through the

* नैतत् समाचरेज्जातु मनसापि ह्यनीश्वरः ।
विनश्यत्याचरन्मौढ्याद्यथा रुद्रोऽब्धिजं विषम् ॥
गोपीना तत्पतीनाञ्च सर्वेषामेव देहिनाम् ।
योऽन्तश्चरति सोऽध्यक्षः क्रीडनेनेह देहमाक् ॥
अनुग्रहाय भूतानां मानुष देहमास्थितः ।
भजते तादृशीः क्रीडा याः स्मृत्वा तत्परो भवेत् ॥

(*Srīmad Bhagavata* X २२२३३, ३१, ३६, ३७)

ज तक

intellect, the mind and the senses, and lovingly remember Him at all times he should aspire to become a devotee of God, and not God Himself

The soul (*Jiva*) is a fragment of God, therefore, it contains the element of bliss—it is a part of the bliss-aspect of God. Should one withdraw this particle of joy from the transient and ephemeral objects of enjoyment, which through error of judgment appear pleasant to us, though rooted in sorrow, and direct it towards the everlasting beauty and sweetness of God, he can attain that eternal and unlimited joy, the joy of Divine Love, in place of the transitory, illusive and trivial sense-enjoyment. When this faculty of joy possessed by man gets purified and elevated, it assumes its real character and is freed from the taint of desire, and begins to long for a taste of the nectarean beauty and sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; so long as this faculty of joy remains merged in the enjoyments of

the senses, it does not turn its face towards Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, shaking off all attachments for worldly enjoyments one should constantly hear and sing with greatest reverence the story of the sports of Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and accepting anyone of the female companions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as his preceptor should meditate according to her directions on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's sports till one loses consciousness of his body and mind and gets absorbed in Divine Love.

This scrappy exposition of the Love of the Gopīs based on facts collected at random from the scriptures has been rather a dry presentation of that Love which is full of the delicious juice of divine sentiments. It is something beyond the reach of ordinary individuals, it cannot be described through human speech, nor can it be portrayed by the pen. What we should do is to adore the sacred feet of the blessed Gopīs, who are love incarnate, and beg of them the gift of this Love

जातक

and fulfil our human birth through chanting the Name and singing the glory of their dear Syāmasundara (Śrī Kṛṣṇa). Says Śrī Lalita Kīṣorī:—

"Damn all other work if your hands
are not kept busy in decorating the
Divine Forms of Śyāmā and Śyāma
(Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa)

If you have never had the good
fortune of washing the sacred feet
of the blessed couple and drinking
the water so used, damn all other
cold drinks

If you have never had the opportu-
nity of rambling in the avenues and
bowers of Brīṇḍāvan,
Accursed be the joy of having a
pleasure-drive in other gardens
Accursed be this life itself, as
throughout its long years these eyes
have not been able to behold the
blessed form of the Beloved of my
heart "†

॥ रुचि कर सँवारे नाहिं अग-अग स्यामा-स्याम,
एरी धिक्कार और नाना कर्म कीन्हे पै ।
पायन को धोइ निज करन ना पान कियो,
आली अंगार परै सीतल जल पीये पै ॥

जात

will grow from within, and you will realize Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the be-all and end-all of your life. Glory be to the Gopīs, and blessed be the dust of the lotus-feet of the Lord of the Gopīs!



The Philosophy of Love

The Divine Name and Its Practice

By Syt Hanumanprasad Poddar

"Though this age of Kali is full of vices, it possesses one great virtue that during this period through mere chanting of the Divine Name one can obtain release from bondage and realize God That which was attained through meditation in Satyayuga, through performances of sacrifices in Tretāyuga and through personal service and worship of God in Dwāparayuga, can be obtained in Kaliyuga through mere chanting of Śrī Hari's Name and glories " This authoritative declaration made in the *Bhāgavata* by the great ascetic Śukadeva lays down once for all the value of the Divine Name specially to spiritual practitioners of the present age According to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu the greatest atonement for sins and the highest means for attainment of Divine Love is the practice of Śrī Hari's Name Saints like Kabir Nānak, Ekanāth, Tukārām, Rāmdās, Sūndās, Nandādās, Charandās, Dādū, Sundardās, Mirā Bāi, Sahajo Bāi, Dayā Bāi, Sakhū Bāi and others—all recognized the Divine Name as the principal means of working out the salvation of the human soul and preached its glory through their incomparable teachings The booklet is an English translation of the author's original article in Hindi and brings out within a short compass all the aspects of the practice of the Divine Name through Japa, Remembrance and Kirtana It shows what obstacles have to be guarded against and in what spirit the practice of the Name should be adopted so that the practisant may realize the highest object of existence in this very life

Popular edition, beautifully printed, pp. 96
Price Three Annas only

The Gita Press, Gorakhpur.

Wavelets of Bliss

The Divine Message

जात



